

Finally, I may mention that Dr. Comrie, late surgeon of H.M.S. 'Basilisk,' under the command of Capt. Moresby, has placed in my hands for determination a small collection of bird-skins, made during the survey of the N.E. coast of New Guinea, of which Capt. Moresby has lately given us such an interesting narrative*. Amongst these are a single skin of a fine new *Manucodia*, which I described at a recent Meeting of the Zoological Society as *M. comrii*, and several examples of that rare Lory *Lorius hypænochrous* of G. R. Gray—both fine additions to the Papuan avifauna.

May 13, 1876.

XXXIV.—*Notes on a 'Catalogue of the Accipitres in the British Museum,' by R. Bowdler Sharpe (1874).* By J. H. GURNEY.

[Continued from p. 243.]

IT will be convenient in considering the Old-World species of the genus *Buteo* to commence with *B. vulgaris*; and in doing so I would remark that Mr. Sharpe only alludes in somewhat general terms to the geographical range of this species, but that a detailed account of the localities where it has been ascertained to exist will be found in Mr. Dresser's recent article on this species in his 'Birds of Europe;' and to this account I have only to add, with reference to its western range, that the Norwich Museum contains an adult pair†, with their nestling young, obtained in the island of Madeira, and, with reference to its eastern, that the same collection possesses specimens from Trebizond and Erzeroom.

It is well known that this species is very subject to partial leucotism; but how far this is limited to young birds does not appear to have been accurately ascertained; I have, however, observed that such examples usually have a straw-coloured

* See above, p. 259.

† These specimens have been recently examined by Mr. Dresser, who agrees with me in referring them to *B. vulgaris*, of which they are, in fact, typical examples.

iris instead of the dark hazel iris which is characteristic of normal specimens.

Apart from these accidental variations of plumage, the passage from the immature to the adult dress is not marked in this species by any very conspicuous change; the dark markings on the under surface, however, are decidedly more or less longitudinal in immature specimens, whilst they are always transverse in those which are fully adult, except on the throat, where they are permanently longitudinal.

Mr. Sharpe speaks of a young bird as having the interspaces on the upper surface of the tail "strongly shaded with rufous." I have also seen a rufous tinge on the rectrices of an immature specimen; but it is by no means a characteristic of immature age, as it is most frequently absent at that period, and on the other hand, I never saw it so strongly marked as in a specimen which was known to have lived in confinement for twenty years.

At page 182 of his work, Mr. Sharpe also remarks that British specimens of this Buzzard "are certainly darker than continental birds." This statement does not altogether tally with my experience; and it is my belief that no geographical variation of tint would be found to prevail in a sufficient series of normal specimens of British and foreign origin, though I think it probable that partial leucotism will be found more rife among the individuals of this species in some countries than in others, and though it certainly is not very prevalent amongst British specimens, which are, for the most part, normal in their markings and coloration*.

It is remarkable that the island of Madagascar should possess a distinct Buzzard (*B. brachypterus*), which, but for its proportionally shorter wing, might almost be said to be a miniature of *B. vulgaris*; but as this curious species does not appear to require any further comment on the present occa-

* The 'Zoologist' for the present year contains at page 4829 an interesting note by Mr. Cordeaux on the contents of a nest of *Buteo vulgaris*, taken in North Wales in June 1872. He says, "there were two young partly fledged birds in the nest; and beside them lay two moles, two stoats, and a pine-marten."

sion, I pass on to the consideration of *Buteo desertorum*, respecting which, however, I have but little to add to my remarks in 'The Ibis' for 1862, p. 361.

In the case of this species, as in that of *B. vulgaris*, a very full article has lately appeared from the pen of Mr. Dresser in the 'Birds of Europe,' in which he gives more ample details as to the measurements, variations of plumage, and geographical range of this Buzzard than can be looked for in the briefer summary comprised in Mr. Sharpe's work. In this article Mr. Dresser mentions the fact of his having received a specimen of *B. desertorum* from the remarkably northern locality of Archangel; and since its publication he has seen a second example, which was also obtained in that vicinity.

In Mr. Dresser's article on *B. vulgaris* he remarks that subsequently to the publication of his account of *B. desertorum* he had examined the Buzzards obtained by Mr. Godman in the Azores, and had "ascertained that they were not, as was supposed, *B. vulgaris*, but *B. desertorum*""*.

Mr. Gould, in the introduction to his magnificent work on the birds of Great Britain, refers to a Buzzard of this species which was killed at Everley, Wiltshire, in September 1864. This specimen Mr. Gould kindly permitted me to examine, when it was in his custody, some years since; and there appeared to me to be no doubt of its being really *B. desertorum* in immature plumage.

I may add that Mr. Gould, in his remarks upon this species, says, "it is included by Schlegel in his 'Fauna Japonica,'" which conveys the idea that it had been received from Japan; but this is a misapprehension: the authors of the 'Fauna Japonica' give, at page 16 of their volume "Aves," a list of Buzzards which they consider to be nearly allied to *Buteo japonicus*; and it is merely *in this list and as one of these species* that they mention "la buse commune du Cap espèce que nous désignerons sous le nom de *Buteo capensis*."

Mr. Sharpe states that *B. desertorum* "gradually gets darker with age;" but having had the opportunity of watch-

* *Conf. Ibis*, 1866, p. 94.

ing its changes of plumage in confinement, I do not think that they bear out this assertion.

The change which takes place in the passage from the immature to the fully adult dress is chiefly characterized by the bird becoming, throughout, less fuliginous and more intensely rufous; but this can only be correctly estimated by a comparison of individuals which have newly moulted; for I know no Buzzard in which the plumage becomes so worn and faded between the period of the assumption and moult of its feathers as in this species, and especially in North-African individuals, so that it seems difficult to recognize the ragged and faded bird which is approaching its moult as identical with the wearer of the rich rufous dress which distinguishes the adult of this species when the process of moulting has been but just completed.

It may be useful to note in conclusion that full details of the coloration &c. of Himalayan examples of this Buzzard are given by Mr. Hume in his 'Rough Notes,' pp. 271-274.

Buteo ferox, the next species which we have to consider, is closely allied to *B. desertorum*, but of larger dimensions and a less extended geographical range.

This Buzzard, like *B. desertorum*, though not quite to the same extent, is liable to a great loss of colour from the fading and attrition of the plumage between the period of its moults; and this circumstance must be borne in mind in studying the variations to which this species is liable.

Buteo ferox, like *B. desertorum* and *B. vulgaris*, has been recently the subject of a very full and exhaustive article by Mr. Dresser in the 'Birds of Europe,' to which I would refer my readers.

Mr. Dresser's views of the changes of plumage incident to this species differ from those propounded by Mr. Sharpe; and the observations which I have made on numerous specimens lead me to agree in this instance with the opinions of Mr. Dresser rather than with those which have been published by Mr. Sharpe.

It seems to me to be certain that, in this species, the transverse bars upon the tail are ordinarily and normally an indi-

cation of immaturity; and as all the melanistic specimens which I have seen, as well as those described by Mr. Hume (*vide* 'Rough Notes,' p. 282), are thus barred, I cannot but believe that they are immature birds, and not very old individuals, as supposed by Mr. Sharpe.

At the same time it is quite certain that this melanistic phase is not the ordinary immature plumage (*vide* Mr. Dresser's description of a nestling from Smyrna); and I therefore look upon it as an accidental and abnormal variation which, so far as I know, has hitherto only been met with in Northern, and especially in North-western India, and once also in Abyssinia*.

Mr. W. E. Brooks, to whose correspondence I have been indebted for much information upon Indian birds of prey, writes to me respecting this dark-coloured form as follows:—"It is a common bird in the Northern Punjab, where it is commoner than the red bird; since it never leaves its northern quarters, like the other, I believe it to be distinct from *B. ferox*."

Mr. Hume, on the contrary, though he in the first instance described the fuliginous form as being probably specifically distinct (*vide* Ibis, 1869, p. 356), has subsequently inclined to the opinion that it is identical with *B. ferox*, and that the fuliginous plumage is assumed (as stated by Mr. Sharpe) by old rather than by immature individuals (*vide* 'Rough Notes,' p. 278, and 'Stray Feathers,' 1873, p. 159).

It would appear, from Mr. Hume's article in the 'Rough Notes,' that he does not take the same view as Mr. Brooks of the relative abundance of the two forms in the Punjab; but this may, perhaps, arise from Mr. Hume's observations having reference to a more southerly district of the Punjab than those of Mr. Brooks, and we may look with confidence to the zeal and perseverance of our ornithological fellow-labourers in Northern India as a means of clearing up, by further observations, whatever still remains doubtful and obscure in our knowledge of this fine Buzzard.

* Since the above was in print I have observed that the dark phase of *Buteo ferox* has been recorded by Severtzoff (under the title of *B. nigricans*) as occurring and breeding in Turkestan: *vide* 'The Ibis,' 1875, p. 103.

To proceed to the consideration of another allied species, I may observe that Mr. Sharpe identifies *Buteo japonicus* of Temminck and Schlegel with *B. plumipes* of Hodgson. I do not feel altogether certain that this identification is correct*; and even if it be so, I cannot agree with Mr. Sharpe's view that this dark form is the "very old" stage of plumage in this species. To me it seems much more likely to be an accidental melanism, both from its great rarity, and from the fact of its never having been observed either in China or Japan, but only in countries adjacent to the Himalayah Mountains—a circumstance which possibly may afford a parallel to the occurrence, in a similarly restricted but more westerly district, of the melanistic phase of *B. ferox*.

Buteo japonicus, in its normal adult plumage, bears a very remarkable resemblance in the coloration of the upper portion of the breast to the adult male of *B. swainsoni* of North America; but in the case of *B. japonicus* this peculiarity is, I believe, common to both sexes.

Some valuable remarks on the partial feathering of the tarsus in this species will be found at pages 17 and 18 of the 'Fauna Japonica,' which also treats at page 19 of the still greater development of this peculiarity in another oriental Buzzard, *B. hemilasius*, a species respecting which the learned authors of this work remark, with great truth, "qu'elle tient précisément le milieu entre les buses pattues et les buses ordinaires."

As specimens of *Buteo hemilasius* are very scarce in collections, it may be desirable to record the following measurements of a female from Shanghai, which is preserved in the Norwich Museum:—culmen from front of cere 1·35 inch, wing from carpal joint 18·9, tarsus 3·2, middle toe s. u. 1·8.

This specimen agrees generally in coloration with the female described by Mr. Sharpe, but has much fewer transverse bars on the tail: the central pair of rectrices have but four such bars, above which are three irregular marks that do not appear on the other rectrices; and some of these also differ from the central pair in having only three transverse

* See Dr. Jerdon's remarks in 'The Ibis' for 1871, p. 340, and Mr. Blanford's in 'The Ibis' for 1872, p. 87.

bars; the terminal portion of the tail in this specimen is slightly tinged with rufous.

From *Buteo hemilasius* it appears to be a natural transition to pass to the consideration of the Rough-legged Buzzards, forming the genus *Archibuteo*; subsequently to which I propose to recur to the remaining Buteonine groups with unfeathered tarsi, to which I have not as yet alluded.

In treating of the genus *Archibuteo*, it may be convenient, in the first instance, to refer to *Archibuteo strophiatius* of Hodgson, a species of at least equal rarity with *Buteo hemilasius*, and of somewhat similar geographical range, as it extends from Northern India to China, where it has been obtained as far north as Shanghai; it has not, however, so far as I know, been observed in Japan.

The earliest synonyms for this species are, according to Mr. Sharpe's work, the following:—

Hemiaëtus strophiatius, Hodgson, in Gray's Zool. Misc. p. 81 (1844).

Archibuteo strophiatius, Gray, Cat. of Hodgson's Coll. of Mammals and Birds of Nepal, p. 39 (1846).

Archibuteo hemiptilopus, Blyth, J. A. S. B. vol. xv. p. 1 (1846).

Archibuteo cryptogenys, Hodgson, Calcutta Journ. N. H. p. 94, pl. 3.* fig. 1 (1847).

In considering the question whether these synonyms are all properly referable to the same species, it may be well to mention that the British Museum possesses what appears to be the undoubted type specimen of Hodgson's "*strophiatius*," as that specific name† is inscribed on a coloured drawing presented by Mr. Hodgson to the Museum, which so accurately represents the stuffed specimen in the national collection, that I think there can be no doubt of its being a portrait of that individual. This specimen is also figured in Mr. Sharpe's work, pl. 7. fig. 2.

* This plate is erroneously referred to as pl. 5 in Mr. Sharpe's book, probably from a misprint.

† I am indebted to Mr. Sharpe for the following copy of the inscription on this drawing:—" *Aquila? strophiatia*. Type of the subgenus *Hemiaëtus*, mihi."

The late Dr. Jerdon, writing at page 340 of 'The Ibis' for 1871 respecting Hodgson's *A. strophiatatus*, remarks that "it is certainly the same as Blyth's *A. hemiptilopus*. . . . His specimen in the British Museum . . . perfectly resembles the type of Blyth's *hemiptilopus*."

I have no doubt that this view is correct, although it would appear from Mr. Blyth's description of the type of *A. hemiptilopus* that it wants the "broad irregular band of white across the breast" (to quote the words of Mr. Sharpe) which is conspicuous in the type of *A. strophiatatus*.

This, however, seems to be but a variable character, as a male from Shanghai in the Norwich Museum has much more white on the underparts than the type specimen, agreeing in this respect with a presumed female from Kooloo, described by Mr. Hume in 'Stray Feathers' for 1873, p. 315.

Mr. Hume also mentions that in his specimen "the first three quills have the whole of both webs above the emargination pure white;" but this is probably an individual peculiarity, as in the Shanghai specimen at Norwich the outer webs above the emargination of these quills are dark grey, and in the British-Museum specimen the primaries are described by Mr. Sharpe as "having a slight greyish shade externally;" Mr. Blyth also describes the type of *A. hemiptilopus* as having the "primaries dusky, paler above the emargination of the outer web."

Unfortunately Mr. Hodgson's specific name of "*strophiatatus*" is unaccompanied by any description, either in Dr. Gray's 'Zoological Miscellany' (1844, p. 81) or in his Nepal Catalogue (1846, p. 39); and I therefore apprehend that, unless such a description was published elsewhere prior to the publication of Mr. Blyth's specific name of *hemiptilopus* (which, so far as I can ascertain, is not the case), it will be right to drop the specific name of "*strophiatatus*" and to adopt that of "*hemiptilopus*," assuming that the identity of these two birds is (as I think it is) sufficiently established.

There is, however, another question which arises with reference to the synonymy of this Buzzard, viz.:—Is *Archi-*

buteo cryptogenys of Hodgson really identical with his *A. strophiatatus*, and consequently with Blyth's *A. hemiptilopus*?

Mr. Hodgson appears to have been very decided in his opinion that *A. cryptogenys* is a good and distinct species, as may be seen by a reference to the paper in which he described and figured it in the 8th volume of the 'Calcutta Journal of Natural History;' but unfortunately the type specimen of *A. cryptogenys* does not (so far as I know) now exist, and in its absence it is not easy to decide with certainty whether it really was or was not distinct from *A. strophiatatus*, or, to use the more correct name, from *A. hemiptilopus*.

I am indebted to Mr. W. E. Brooks, who has paid considerable attention to this question, for his expression of his opinion that Mr. Hodgson's view of the distinctness of *A. cryptogenys* was correct; but, on the other hand, Mr. Hume, in the article in 'Stray Feathers' for 1873, to which I have already alluded, treats *A. cryptogenys* as identical with *A. hemiptilopus* (though apparently not admitting the identity of the latter with *A. strophiatatus*); and I may add that the late Dr. Jerdon also greatly doubted the distinctness of *A. cryptogenys*, as may be seen by his remarks in 'The Ibis' for 1871, p. 340.

Without attempting to decide this doubtful question, I may nevertheless offer an observation on one point connected with it, viz. that the circumstance of the nares being nearly hidden by thickset soft plumuli in *A. cryptogenys* (as mentioned by Mr. Hodgson in his description of this Buzzard) is certainly not a specific peculiarity, inasmuch as the nostrils are similarly covered in the type specimen of *A. strophiatatus*, as they also are in the example from Shanghai in the Norwich Museum.

In conclusion, it may, perhaps, be worth while to add the principal dimensions of the last-named specimen, which was marked by the collector as a male: these are—wing from carpal joint 17·8 inches, tarsus 3·1, middle toe s. u. 1·6; the culmen is imperfect.

Proceeding to the consideration of the Rough-legged Buzzard of *Europe* (*A. lagopus*), I may remark that Mr. Sharpe's

list of the specimens of that Buzzard in the British Museum includes two immature examples obtained in Natal by the late Sir A. Smith, which afford evidence of the extensive and irregular wanderings of the young birds of this species, and perhaps also make it probable that Le Vaillant was accurate in stating that he had obtained this Buzzard during his travels in South Africa, although it is, on the other hand, quite possible that the bird he obtained there was *Nisaëtus pennatus*, and that afterwards, writing from memory, he confused the Booted Eagle with the Rough-legged Buzzard.

Be this as it may, the specimens obtained by Sir A. Smith (presuming that no error has occurred respecting their locality) form an exception to the statement in Mr. Dresser's article on this species, in his 'Birds of Europe,' that "it has never been met with south of the Mediterranean." I may add that in the Catalogue of the birds in the British Museum, published in 1848, only one of these Natal specimens is mentioned, which probably arose from the other specimen not having been mounted.

The Norwich Museum contains two newly fledged nestlings of this species, which are remarkable for the conspicuous rufous margins of their feathers. In one of these this peculiarity strongly pervades both the upper and under portions of the plumage; in the other it is less conspicuous, and is limited to the upper parts only. Such rufous margins, in great measure, disappear from the plumage of the young bird in the course of the first autumn, but are frequently more or less reassumed at subsequent moults.

The change from the immature to the fully adult dress is probably not completed till the third year; and the specimen described by Mr. Sharpe as an "adult female" does not appear to me to have attained its full adult plumage, which is well described at page 119 of vol. i. of Professor Newton's edition of Yarrell's 'British Birds,' and also in Mr. Dresser's article to which I have already referred: this adult stage is especially characterized by the dark transverse bands on a white ground which appear to be always more or less conspicuous on the upper surface of the tail in fully adult

birds. In such specimens these bands are from three to four in number, in addition to the dark subterminal band, which is also found in younger individuals, and is much broader in young birds than in those which are adult.

In those specimens which are in a state of change from the immature to the fully adult dress, this broad and dark subterminal band is itself crossed by one or more comparatively narrow bands of a paler brown, which ultimately become white as the bird assumes its completely adult dress.

The iris in this species appears to be brown in some specimens and yellow in others, and to exhibit various shades of these colours in different individuals.

Melanistic varieties of this Buzzard are extremely rare, which is the more remarkable as they are of very frequent occurrence in the case of its closely allied North-American representative, *A. sancti-johannis*.

Such a melanistic specimen is mentioned by Professor Newton at page 122 of the 'Ootheca Wolleyana;' and I have recently seen a remarkably fine melanism of this species, which was one of the many examples of the Rough-legged Buzzard obtained in Great Britain during the autumn and winter of 1875.

This specimen, which was trapped in the neighbourhood of Barnstaple in December last, has been added to the collection of the Rev. Murray A. Matthew, of Bishop's Lydeard, in Somersetshire, to whose courtesy I have been indebted for an opportunity of examining it, so far as the case in which it is now glazed up would permit of my doing so. It is a very fine specimen, and unusually large in its dimensions for a male bird, which it is asserted to have been by the bird-stuffer who dissected and mounted it; Mr. Matthew, who measured it before it was cased up, informed me that he found the length of the wing from the carpal joint 17·5 inches, and that of the tarsus 3·5. The bird had, apparently, just completed its moult, and is in beautiful condition, the plumage being throughout (with very slight exceptions, hereafter to be noticed) of a very dark brown, strongly tinged with purplish reflections, especially on the interseapular feathers;

the scapulars are slightly paler than the rest of the plumage, and show dark shaft-marks, which are not visible elsewhere; the lesser and middle wing-coverts, on the side which I was able to examine, each showed a solitary feather of the previous year still unmoulted, and decidedly paler than the surrounding plumage; the second, third, and fourth primaries also appear not to have been moulted, and are tinged with grey, the others being almost black; the lower portion of the abdomen and the tibiæ are also nearly black, being perceptibly darker than the general colour of the body; the under tail-coverts have a few white spots on them, wedge-shaped, with the narrow end of the wedge pointing downwards; these spots, and a slight tinge of white on the lores and on the extreme front of the forehead, are the only white portions of the plumage which I was able to detect; on the upper surface of the tail three irregular transverse grey bars are visible, which are especially apparent on the four central rectrices, the remainder of the tail being a dark brown; these bars are rather more than half an inch in breadth, and about twice as broad as the brown interspaces between them*; the under surface of the tail is greyish white, slightly mottled with a darker tint, and crossed by an irregular subterminal band of dark greyish brown.

Archibuteo sancti-johannis, which is the representative of *A. lagopus* in the North-American continent, approaches so closely to the European race, that I can only consider it a subspecies of *A. lagopus*.

Comparing non-melanistic specimens of *A. sancti-johannis* with normal examples of *A. lagopus*, I find them on the average slightly darker, and decidedly more rufous, the excess of rufous colouring in the American race being especially apparent on the tibial feathers; no appreciable difference in size or measurements exists between the two species.

Mr. Sharpe gives full descriptions of the different phases of plumage incident to *A. sancti-johannis*; and more detailed

* I may remark that in the melanisms of *A. sancti-johannis* which I have examined this proportion is reversed, the brown bars on the tail in these specimens being broad and the grey narrow.

particulars will be found in the article on this species (there styled *Archibuteo lagopus*, var. *sancti-johannis*) in the third volume of the 'History of North-American Birds,' by Messrs. Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway.

The iris in this species appears to be liable to variations of colour similar to those which occur in the case of *A. lagopus*.

There remains but one other species of the genus *Archibuteo*, the beautiful *A. ferrugineus* of Western North America—a species which, as it seems to me, is most obviously and unquestionably distinct, but which, nevertheless, has been unaccountably held by so high an authority as Professor Schlegel to be merely "quelque sort de leucoïsme, ou, si l'on veut, d'érythrisme" of *A. lagopus**.

This fine and well-marked species has been fully described by Mr. Sharpe, and also in the exhaustive work of Messrs. Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway. The latter authors give a table of measurements taken from six males and six females of this species, none of which, however, appear to equal the principal dimensions of the adult described by Mr. Sharpe.

The colour of the iris in this Buzzard seems to be as variable as in *A. lagopus* and *A. sancti-johannis*: Mr. Sharpe describes it as "brown" in the adult; whilst the authors of the American work above referred to mention an adult male in which it was a "clear light yellow," and an adult female in which it was a "light ochraceous brown."

[To be continued.]

XXXV.—*Description of a new Species of the Genus Trichostoma from the Island of Celebes.* By ARTHUR, Viscount WALDEN.

(Plate XI.)

IN Jardine's 'Contributions to Ornithology' (1849, pp. 127, 128, t.) the late Mr. Strickland gave a short account, accompanied by a figure, of a Celebean bird on which he bestowed the title of *Trichastoma celebense*. On the prece-

* *Vide* Mus. des Pays-Bas, Revue de la collection des Oiseaux de Proie, p. 105.